



Citation

to accompany the award of the

Joint Meritorious Unit Award

to

Headquarters, Combined Task Force Operation Northern Watch

The Headquarters Combined Task Force, Operation NORTHERN WATCH, distinguished itself by meritorious achievement from 1 January 2003 to 1 May 2003. During this period, the Combined Task Force demonstrated unparalleled skill while enforcing the no-fly zone over northern Iraq. The Task Force's organizational leadership provided rock solid interface functionally between every facet of the organization to assure coalition success. Operational functionality between planning cells for air tasking orders to communications and airspace control resulting in minimal collateral damage. Despite constant and relentless Iraqi surface-to-air threats, the Task Force flew over 1,000 combat sorties over northern Iraq in close proximity to the Syrian and Iranian borders. Decisive leadership and highly effective tactical power enabled the multinational strike packages of the Task Force to apply unrelenting pressure against Iraqi air defenses in northern Iraq which culminated in the first-ever 24-hour combat operations protecting the US Department of State, SPECIAL ENVOY mission to Kurdish Opposition Forces in northern Iraq. Additionally, the Task Force provided Combat Air Patrol for the first-ever U-2 flight along the entire length of the 36th parallel. Coalition aircraft were responsible for dropping over 840,000 psychological warfare leaflets in northern Iraq in an effort to shorten any potential conflict. The Task Force successfully operated 15 aircraft weapon systems and maintained an 87 percent overall reliability rate. By their exemplary performance to duty, the members of Headquarters Combined Task Force, Operation NORTHERN WATCH, have brought great credit upon themselves, their Service, and the Department of Defense.

Given under my hand this 7th day of May 2003

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul J. Myer", is positioned above the title of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff